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IDEM, ISDH and Labor Department workshops geared to help auto salvage facilities meet rules, protect workers

Three state agencies are teaming to help auto salvage facility owners deal with the sometimes confusing state laws and rules that govern their operations related to the environment, workers' health and safety, and radiologic issues.

Staff from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) and the Indiana Department of Labor/Bureau of Safety Education and Training (DOL/BuSET) have been hosting workshops around the state and will offer one in New Albany June 23 at the One Commerce Square Building, Center Atrium.

"We are pooling state resources to give this important sector of our economy a chance to have all their questions answered in one setting," said IDEM Commissioner Lori F. Kaplan. "IDEM is presenting a new manual designed to help auto salvage facilities comply with environmental laws and rules. Through our combined efforts, we can deliver IDEM's message as well as have ISDH and DOL/BuSET answer other questions the facility owners and workers may have."

"We're happy to take part in these workshops because it gives us an opportunity to reach out to an important part of our workforce," said Nancy Guyott, DOL Commissioner. "These workshops can help employers and employees prevent workplace accidents and keep Hoosiers on the job."

The laws and rules covered by the new manual and the workshops are not new. IDEM has conducted inspections of individual facilities but has not focused on this sector, which routinely deals with many potentially harmful fluids, materials and substances. If these items are not removed, stored and disposed of properly, they can pollute Indiana's air, land and water.

IDEM will be mailing copies of the free auto salvage manual to all known salvage facilities in the state in mid June. Companies that do not receive a manual should contact IDEM at its toll-free number (800) 451-6027 and ask for extension 30701, or they may go online at <http://www.in.gov/idem/autosalvage/> and download a copy.

Although inspections of these facilities occur throughout the year, a focused inspection effort will take place this summer and fall. Appropriate enforcement action will be taken against those facilities found to be in non-compliance.

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Topics to be covered in the workshops by IDEM include an overview of the new auto salvage compliance manual, guidelines to help facilities determine if they generate hazardous waste at their facility, how to properly clean up contamination and rules governing storm water run-off.

ISDH representatives will discuss radiologic issues. “The ISDH Indoor and Radiological Health Program responds to approximately 50-60 radiation alarms at scrap metal recyclers, metal processors, steel mills and other solid waste facilities throughout Indiana annually,” said Rex Bowser, radiation specialist. “These workshops offer us an opportunity to educate local scrap/auto salvage operators about the possible health and safety issues concerning the discovery of radioactive sources.”

IDOL/BuSET staff will discuss worker safety requirements.

Participants must register for the session, which is free-of-charge and will run from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Space may be reserved by calling IDEM’s toll-free number (800) 451-6027 and asking for extension 32370. Online registration is available at <http://www.in.gov/idem/autosalvage/workshops> .